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A History of Warfare

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most frustrating. American personnel are, of course, held in strict compliance with the law of war, and, as the court-martials of both Staff Sergeant Griffin and Lieutenant Calley (extracts from the court decisions of both cases are included) illustrate, they are prosecuted for violations. While many nations do hold their personnel in compliance with the law, it is not universal, and, except when conflicts are won decisively, such as World War II, political considerations often result in a decision not to prosecute war crimes committed by the adversary. Thus, despite the well documented evidence of widespread and premeditated war crimes by Iraqi personnel during the occupation of Kuwait, no prosecutions were carried out and none are likely. As Reisman and Antoniou observe, the international community's failure to muster the political will to enforce the law of war detracts from its normative force.

One unfortunate inclusion in the book is a series of rules of engagement for U.S. forces during the Vietnam War. Although the authors characterize these rules as self-imposed limitations that reflect U.S. military conceptions of the operational law of war, the Vietnam rules of engagement have been heavily criticized for being overly specific, inconsistent, unresponsive to military requirements, and as imposing precautions not required by the law of war. Their inclusion does not detract, however, from an otherwise excellent compendium of materials.

The authors express in the introduction the hope that their work will serve the better to inform the citizen, the journalist, the clergyman, and the politician of the modern law of war. To that list they could have added military officers, who will find this book an informative and useful addition to their professional reading.

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Keegan, John. *A History of Warfare.* New York: Knopf, 1993. 432pp. $27.50

Any book by John Keegan is an event, and this work is no exception. It is undoubtedly his best and most ambitious yet. Keegan, in an interpretive history of warfare from the dawn of recorded history to twentieth-century industrial, mass warfare, analyzes conflict in the societies of the Greeks, Huns, "Horse Peoples," Romans, Arabs, and the industrial West, among many others.

Keegan believes that war is not merely an extension of politics, as is often ascribed to Clausewitz. Indeed, in an age where it is possible for many states to acquire nuclear weapons, politics cannot be permitted to extend casually into warfare. (One need not be a scholar of Clausewitz to see that his view of warfare as a manageable and rational thing belongs to the nineteenth century.)

The discussion begins with several primitive societies in which warfare was conducted by demonstration, maneuver, indirection, delay, and evasion. Withdrawal was seen not as lack of moral fiber but as frequently the sensible thing to do. Most often,

the objective of these conflicts was not to destroy an opponent but rather to cause his surrender with minimum destruction to both parties.

Keegan suggests that the West's capacity to exploit technology—a capacity originally based on face-to-face combat, maneuver warfare, and ideological struggle—has brought it to the point where it might do well to reexamine the less lethal, less direct styles of warfare practiced in earlier times—an individual judgment left to the reader.

The major question in all this is, why does warfare exist? Keegan reviews what anthropologists and other academics have contributed, finding it inadequate. In his own analysis, tribes and states engage in warfare for the acquisition of territory and resources, for the extension of power and influence, for the glory of an idea and of themselves—and, sometimes, he believes, they fight for the simple hell of it. Keegan acknowledges the existence of a warrior mentality but does not, however, claim this to be a first cause of war. He maintains that the existence of well disciplined, state-supported armies is a necessary instrument of civilization and the maintenance of the rule of law.

Ultimately, Keegan holds that warfare is cultural, that a society's style of war reflects its cultural values. Western culture's fascination with technology and Clausewitzian warfare has developed an extraordinarily lethal style. Thus, he concludes that "the habits of the primitive—devotees themselves of restraint, diplomacy and negotiation—deserve relearning. Unless we unlearn the habits we have taught ourselves, we shall not survive."

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Dupuy, Trevor N. *Future Wars: The World's Most Dangerous Flashpoints.* New York: Warner, 1993. 334pp. $21.95

Colonel Dupuy has again written an interesting and provocative book. Dupuy, noted for his technical and quantitative studies of warfare, attempts in this work to examine how wars may occur and how each will likely be fought. He has been assisted by many hands and by a computerized war-gaming program, the "Tactic Numerical Deterministic Model" (TNDM).

Dupuy's method is straightforward: he identifies nine regions worldwide where cross-border tensions could plausibly evolve into war. Although the tenth conflict involves civil war in Russia, it fits his regional model. For each conflict Dupuy describes the general historical and geopolitical background and the specific causes for regional tensions. He then engages in "pseudo-history" (as he calls it), a scenario that explains how the regional tensions evolved into war, how the primary battle was fought, and how the conflict was brought to resolution. Dupuy is quick to note that the scenario is not necessarily the most likely one, but only a possibility. The combatants are then assigned specific operational forces that parallel their existing armed services. Once the war commences, the